

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

August 29, 2018

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Leader Pelosi:

We write to request you bring up legislation to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and provide it with dedicated funding before this critical program expires on September 30th.

The LWCF is our nation's premier land conservation and recreation access program. For over 50 years, the LWCF has benefited Colorado's prized outdoors, our economy, and our people. Colorado's public lands are foundational to our state's character and our economy, and the LWCF ensures the health and future of those public lands. The fund invests in conservation, history, recreation, working landscapes, and forests, creating jobs and local economic opportunities at no expense to the taxpayer.

The LWCF has invested nearly \$270 million in our state over the program's lifetime. This includes over \$200 million in investments in our state's national parks, national forests, and habitat conservation, as well as assistance to our state to maintain working forest lands and local jobs through matching grants and conservation easements. The LWCF has also invested over \$60 million in state and local projects funding everything from local trails and open space to recreation centers, baseball fields, golf courses, whitewater river parks, and more.

Core to the LWCF's mission is promoting access to recreation, a major driver of Colorado's economy. Outdoor recreation generates over \$28 billion in consumer spending annually in our state, with a whopping 71 percent of residents participating in outdoor recreation each year. The industry is also a major employer with nearly 230,000 direct jobs and \$9.7 billion in wages and salaries annually, with exponentially more indirect benefits.

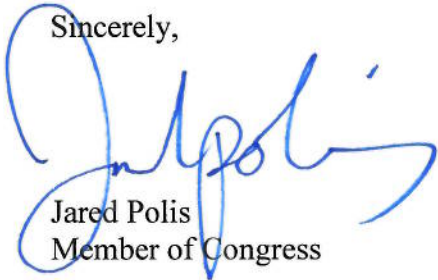
In Colorado, you can barely throw a stone without hitting an LWCF investment. Our state's crown jewel national parks have all benefited from the LWCF, including Mesa Verde, Rocky Mountain, Black Canyon of the Gunnison, and the Great Sand Dunes. Hunters and anglers have seen the benefits of trail and river access to world class elk hunting at Cross Mountain Ranch or along the gold-medal trout waters of the Roaring Fork River. LWCF investments are ubiquitous in our local communities that rely on outdoor recreation and in cities that simply want to ensure local access to green space and the outdoors. Other recent LWCF investments include Evergreen Lake ice skating in the winter, Confluence Whitewater Park in downtown Denver, river trails and whitewater park access in Buena Vista, Garden of the Gods in Colorado Springs, Crawford

Reservoir in Delta, Clear Creek Trail in Jefferson County, and the Yuma County School District baseball fields.

It is important for Colorado and the nation for the LWCF to be reauthorized and ensure dedicated and stable funding for the future. Because investments come together from willing sellers, local communities, and often local matching funds, expiration of the program or inconsistent funding levels means uncertainty for these long-planned projects. Every year, important LWCF needs go unmet, resulting in an ever-growing backlog of conservation and recreation needs on our public lands. Funding for the LWCF is derived from a small portion of offshore drilling revenue meaning all these benefits and investments are made without taxpayer dollars.

For Colorado, the LWCF is a critical, impactful, and taxpayer friendly program. We ask you to work with us and pass legislation to permanently reauthorize LWCF and dedicate consistent funding before the program expires on September 30th.

Sincerely,

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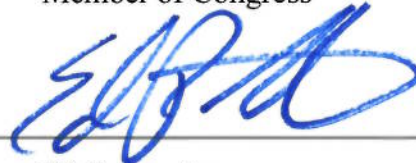
Jared Polis  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Scott Tipton'.

Scott Tipton  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Diana DeGette'.

Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ed Perlmutter'.

Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress